

WEST BASIN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT

NOVEMBER 14, 2002 - Jt. Communications
Kwan, Dear

NOVEMBER 25, 2002 - Board Meeting

Prepared by: Art Aguilar

Submitted by: Art Aguilar

Approved by: Darryl G. Miller

ACTION CALENDAR

DESALINATION PUBLIC RELATIONS UPDATE

SUMMARY:

A considerable amount of activity has taken place during the past month, including media training for Directors and a continuing stream of press releases being distributed with many being printed. Staff has integrated the desalination/barrier public relations efforts into the District's general public relations effort to maximize the potential benefit to the programs of all releases. Local newspapers are beginning to use West Basin as a resource when it comes to water issues, calling for background and quotes, and making good use of District press releases. Media outlets from throughout the state, such as the Sacramento Bee and Associated Press, have shot photos of the Desalination Demonstration Project to illustrate general water stories and for file purposes. The Bee, in fact, included quotes from a District staff member in a general piece after being briefed by public affairs staff about the Project when a photo shoot was being set up.

The planned November 19 community organization breakfast was postponed due to scheduling conflicts and probably won't take place until after the first of the year due to the holidays. A breakfast meeting with city officials is also planned in January.

Considerable planning work has been done on the Seawater Barrier Protection Project, with an issues/action plan review set for November 14, using the Hans Bleiker project review method.

At the October Board meeting, additional information was requested regarding the justification and budgeting for potential new scope items for video, website, and focus group projects. Additional information for each of these items is presented below along with a staff recommendation.

Video

LPC has proposed a state of the art video including both live-action and animation that will explain the need for and benefits of desalination in general while focusing on the West Basin Demonstration Project and future plans.

The live-action portions will feature footage of District events and interviews with Directors and staff explaining various portions of the desalination project and the District's commitment to new sources of water and its customers. The animation portion will feature an "engaging and interesting" character that will walk and talk the audience through the desalination process. Actual content details cannot be determined until pre-production meetings are held with the various parties involved in the Project.

The video has many important uses, including:

- Video news release,
- Public access programming on cable television,
- Community outreach (service clubs, civic groups, etc.),
- Use at meetings with public officials when downloaded into a laptop, and
- Inclusion on the District web site.

Costs for production of a desalination video are:

• Pre-production (script development, animation)	\$ 6,000
• Production	\$11,000
• Post-production (narration, graphics, editing)	\$16,000
• Animation	<u>\$ 8,000</u>
Total cost:	\$41,000

Staff recommends producing the basic video. However, as an option the video can be re-edited and packaged for specific audiences and purposes.

Optional packages include editing and re-shooting for use at:

• Schools	\$ 6,000*
• Government meetings	\$ 6,000*
• Half-hour cable show	\$ 6,000*

(* Estimated costs. Actual costs would be determined prior to shooting)

Recommendation: Staff recommends completion of the basic video at a cost of \$41,000 since the finished product achieves the basic promotional objectives for the Project. Optional versions can be done on an as-needed basis now or in the future with costs being determined at that time.

Website

After considering the options of adding a page or pages on desalination to the current District website or developing a separate website dedicated strictly to desalination, staff suggests using the current site for promotion of the project as the most cost-effective option. Desalination information and desalination video can be added to the current website at a cost of \$150 to \$200 per page, using our current website. The cost of streaming the video will add \$2,000 to \$3,000 to the cost. Maintenance costs should stay the same.

Estimated costs for adding desalination pages to current website (using highest estimate):

• Addition of three pages	\$ 600
• Streaming basic desalination video	<u>\$ 3,000</u>
Total	\$ 3,600

Development of a separate desalination website would require the following services:

- Search and selection of domain name(s)

- Design and development of project content & website
- Hosting of website
- Traffic tracking and data collection
- Broadcasting of email newsletter and update
- Streaming of video news release
- Streaming of virtual tour of demonstration project
- Q&A game for school education
- Coordination of linking to other agencies
- Monthly update of website

A budget estimate for this optional project is:

▪ Planning, content development	
▪ and design of the website-one time fee	\$ 8,000
▪ Programming-one time fee	\$ 3,500
▪ Hosting -\$375 per month x 12	\$ 4,500*
Storage of up to 100 Gig data	
Multiple hosting back ups and access locations	
Unlimited access traffic	
▪ Video Streaming-one time fee	\$ 4,200
Online broadcasting of up to 10 video clips for multiple access speeds(different format/configurations are needed for various speeds such as dial up, DSL or broadband)	
▪ Maintenance-\$183 per month x 12	\$ 2,200*
Dynamic web counter for instant messages	
Online customer mailing list	
Broadcasting of newsletter	
News release mailing room	
Update and maintenance of video streaming	
	Total \$22,400

(*Recurring annual costs)

Staff does believe that having a website dedicated strictly to desalination has merit, but would be best used in a more universal manner, perhaps by the Desalination Coalition and the Metropolitan Water District. Staff can approach the coalition and MWD to discuss this possibility with all the parties paying a pro-rata fair share of the cost.

Recommendation: Staff recommends adding desalination pages, including the basic video, to the current District website and promoting the addition extensively in local media, and at District and community events. The desalination pages can be developed and maintained efficiently on the current District website for a fraction of the cost of developing an entirely new and independent website.

Focus Groups

Focus groups have been used in the past to help shape District policy and direction and may be useful in the current Desalination Project if expanded to include other topics for maximum value. Information could be sought on desalination, bottled water (attitudes,

packaging preferences, uses), recycled water, knowledge of the District and its programs and other questions and concerns brought forward by staff and Directors.

Estimated costs are:

▪ Facility rental	\$ 2,550
▪ Recruiting	\$ 8,250
▪ Audio, taping	\$ 2,240
▪ Equipment rental	\$ 1,475
▪ Refreshments	\$ 530
▪ Misc. supplies	\$ 550
▪ Moderator	\$ 4,600
▪ Project management	\$ 8,250 (includes final report)
▪ Incentives (respondents)	\$ 3,600
▪ 15% contingency	\$ 4,300
Total	\$36,545

Recommendation: Staff recommends that a single focus group session be done with the topics being studied, developed and refined by this Committee and the full Board to maximize the effectiveness of the focus group project and provide valuable information to the Board and staff for use in planning and development of projects.

FISCAL IMPACTS:

The video/animation, website and focus group portions of the plan are unbudgeted items and require Board approval. Funding for these expenditures will be from excess operating revenues for the fiscal year.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE:

None.

COMMITTEE STATUS:

This item was reviewed by the West Basin Joint Communications Committee members on November 14, 2002 and recommended for approval at the November 25, 2002 Board meeting.

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

That the Committee recommends that the Board approve additional funding for the following projects:

1. Production of a basic, multi-purpose desalination video in the amount of \$41,000;
2. Addition of at least three pages on desalination and the project video to the current District website at an estimated cost of \$3,600; and
3. Host a single focus group session, including facility, equipment, monitor, consumer recruitment and a final report, in the amount of \$36,545.

For a total amount of additional unbudgeted expenditures of \$81,145.